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Speeches, The United Nations and the Soviet Union: Power in Transition

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F O R R E L E A S E F R I D A Y A . M . ' s

ADDRESS OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

at the

1971 EISENHOWER SYMPOSIUM, THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Thursday, November 18, 1971, 8:00 p.m.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION: POWER IN TRANSITION

I am delighted to find myself delivering the benediction at these proceedings. It is an uncommon experience. The last word is something that is rarely reserved for the Leadership in a Senate of unlimited debate.

Notwithstanding this built-in propensity for talk, however, the Senate has acted with unusual dispatch during the past few weeks. While this symposium has pondered the dilemmas of power, the Senate has sought to resolve several of them.

With regard to Viet Nam, for example, the Senate voted first to establish a national policy of full withdrawal

within six months. Later, at the insistence of the House, which had an assist from the Administration, the specific time span was removed and full withdrawal was accepted only as a Congressional rather than a national policy. Still later, in other legislation, and with the reluctant concurrence of the House and the Administration, the Senate's insistence on full withdrawal from Viet Nam was established as national policy but still without a specific withdrawal date. Finally, in a foreign aid bill, the Senate is making one more effort to restate its pristine and more emphatic position on Viet Nam, that is, full withdrawal within six months.

In similar tugs and starts and stops, the Senate voted to cut, then to increase parts of foreign aid, then to reject it in toto, only to resuscitate most of the Administration's aid program in two bills a short time later, underscoring the fact that foreign aid is a program with more lives than a cat.

Contrary to the appearances, these actions are more than marches up the hill and down. They are not empty gestures. They say what the people of the nation are saying. In language which is audible in the other Branches they say that the Senate wants the war in Viet Nam to end completely and soon. They say, too, that the Senate is growing insistent on a sweeping revision and scale-down of foreign aid.

The apparent indecisiveness of the actions arises, in part, from the fact that there are other centers of federal power--in the House and in the Presidency--wherein other ideas are held and with which the Senate must come to terms. It is also a reflection of a kind of dilemma of power: it is symptomatic of the uncertainty of the Congress in confronting the salient factor of the contemporary international situation.

I am sure this symposium has long since identified that factor. It is the surge of change which is sweeping the globe. From the rimlands of Asia to the western littoral of

Europe international relationships of a generation are giving way; just as currencies, fixed in value for decades, are now floating, so too are old alliances and alignments.

In this nation, a new outlook is readily detectable. It is present especially in the young who are not bound by the fixations of the past but it is by no means confined to the young. The international experiences of the past few years have shocked the thought patterns of the entire nation.

In the United States, the time for a change in foreign policy is ripe. If this situation finds a counterpart in the Soviet Union, then we may well be on the threshold of the liquidation of the dubious heritage of the cold war. Ironically, the era of cold war is ending not in the "positions of strength," which at one time were regarded in U. S. policy as an essential of peace; indeed, the Secretary of Defense has even raised doubts about the present capacity of our defenses. Nor is the cold war closing in drastic changes in the state systems of

Eastern Europe, or the West, which, once in the eyes of more militant ideologists in both countries, were held to be the only basis for its ending.

Rather, the heat has been taken out of the cold war, if I may mix the temperatures, by degrees. Old conflicts have dissolved slowly in symposia such as the one which is taking place here, to which I allude as symbolic of the growth of peaceful interchange between the two systems.

The old conflicts are also diluted by the emergence of other international considerations which have pressed into the purview of the two nations. China, for example, now looms large in the concerns of the Soviet Union. At the same time, the United States is immersed in the practical and urgent threats to the economy, more or less to the exclusion of the theoretical and distant menaces of alien ideologies.

Ironically, this transition comes at a time when the affairs of the nation are presided over by a Republican

Administration which was once in the front ranks of what was termed the "battle for the minds of men." May I say that the irony is all to the credit of the incumbent political leadership. The President has been able to set aside the things of the past. In the light of present realities, he is acting to remove some of the barnacles which encrust the foreign policy of the United States.

Without detracting from the Administration's achievement in any way, I think it is fair to note that the times have been over-ripe for this change. I like to think, too, that the level of reason is such in this nation that the transition might have come under any perceptive administration of whatever partisan stripe. But, perhaps, that is an excessively sanguine expectation. In any event, there is little question of the general effectiveness of the incumbent Administration. It is an effectiveness which tends to support Walter Lippmann's thesis that liberal change is best brought about by conservative government.

The critical element in the Administration's new approach to international policies, it seems to me, is the Nixon Doctrine which was unveiled in Guam in 1969. That Doctrine set the stage for a diminution of the role which the United States has played across the spectrum of world affairs for 25 years. In so doing, it elevated a concept of policy much articulated but little practiced since World War II--that of shared responsibility for the maintenance of world peace. The changes which have been wrought by the Doctrine are already evident not only in Southeast Asia but elsewhere around the globe, as bases are closed and U. S. military forces abroad are reduced.

In some quarters, there is a tendency to see in this process of military contraction some sort of shameful furling of the flag. Rather, the change is sensible and long overdue. It acts to reduce the too heavy burdens which have been carried for too long by the people of the nation often in the vague name of "international commitment." Moreover, if the flag has

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In some quarters, there is a tendency to see in this process of military contraction some sort of shameful furling of the flag. Rather, the change is sensible and long overdue. It acts to reduce the too heavy burdens which have been carried for too long by the people of the nation often in the vague name of "international commitment." Moreover, if the flag has

been placed by a mistaken policy in places where it does not belong--as in Indochina--its withdrawal under the Nixon Doctrine is not only an essential act in our vital national interests, it is also the only honorable course. Indeed, if the Doctrine is to have historic significance in my judgment, it will bring about not a partial but a complete termination of U. S. military involvement in Southeast Asia; that means everywhere on the mainland, be it in Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos, or Thailand and by land, sea and air. The Doctrine will also provide, if it is to have historic significance, the rationale for a continuing reduction in our one-sided military efforts elsewhere in the world, notably, in Western Europe under NATO.

Notwithstanding the diminution of the U. S. military presence abroad, the United States is not about to disappear from the international scene. This nation's weight is immense and it will continue to be felt in many ways and in many places.

That is as desirable as it is inevitable. Indeed, a sensitive concern with affairs beyond our borders remains an essential of the world's civilized survival. That such is the case argues strongly for a most judicious use of our resources abroad. There is no longer a surplus to be expended in haphazard, almost indiscriminate fashion, for fear that the label of isolation may otherwise be pinned on our policies.

It is reassuring, therefore, that along with the military contraction, the omnipresence of U. S. economic aid is also in the process of receding around the globe. In this scale-down which affects largely the bilateral programs of aid, the Senate has played and will continue to play an important part. It is to be anticipated that pressure from the Senate will bring about ^{further} changes in the basic design of the program.

The fact is that the present system has lost much of the charisma which was imparted to it by the Marshall Plan, the Point-Four program and the Peace Corps of another time. Foreign

aid has become, in recent years, a lavish grab-bag, an international pork barrel, and a world wide arms distribution. As presently constituted, the program is an economic drain on the nation. More seriously, it has led the United States via the path of a well-meaning humanitarian generosity into unwarranted political and military involvements in the inner affairs of other peoples.

It may be that foreign aid can be recast into its earlier form of people-to-people cooperation. As it involves economic development, the program has already moved in large part out of bilateral channels and into multilateral agencies. That is a welcomed change. It has the virtue of permitting the burdens of cost to be shared with other nations. At the same time, it insulates this nation from adventures in unilateral internationalism which can lead, as we have seen in Indochina, into tragic entanglements.

Underlying the new direction in U. S. policies, I believe, is a growing tendency to view this nation's interests less in the context of ideological generalities and more in terms of national well-being and survival. Viet Nam has alerted the people to the consequences of a blind pursuit of ideological obsessions. The dollar crisis and the dangerous sidetracking of the nation's inner needs by the demands of the involvement in Southeast Asia have revealed what lies at the end of the road of indiscriminate internationalism. Henceforth, it is to be expected that the United States will exercise greater discretion in choosing grounds on which to defend a more narrowly construed concept of this nation's responsibilities and interests in the world.

It is essential that the implications of the new U. S. approach be considered most carefully by the other nation whose dilemmas of power are juxtaposed against our own in this symposium. Indeed, the risks of confrontation

between the United States and the Soviet Union may even be increased temporarily by the present contracting of the U. S. position. That would be the case if the contraction led to probings of the new limits of our interests abroad. If such probings were to occur, they could very well strike close to the vital considerations of civilized survival.

The effect of a number of other shifts in the balances of world power must also be considered in this time of transition. The world is moving away from a bipartite determinism of international politics. Major questions of war and peace may no longer rest overwhelmingly in the province of the Soviet Union and the United States. Now China is emerging as a major power. So, too, at least in economic terms, is the European Community and Japan.

With more major nations on the scene, more differences to settle and perhaps, more sources of military and nuclear power to manipulate, the problems of peace grow more complex.

We may find that the risk of conflict increases in proportion to the rising number of contenders and the broader the diffusion of international power.

Hopefully, these unhappy possibilities will not come to pass. They need not if the dilution of the roles of the United States and the Soviet Union is accompanied by greater understanding and restraint between these two nations and timely adjustment of relationships with third nations. The United States and the Soviet Union are in a unique position at this point in history. They are emerging from a protracted period of mutual antagonism, without having come to a direct military confrontation. There is little doubt that the combined strength of the two nations, in harmony, could assure to them a substantial share in shaping the conditions of peace. By the same token, in disharmony, that strength can lead to the ultimate disaster of nuclear war or, at the least, it could condemn the possibilities of establishing a durable peace for decades to come.

I do not think that this new situation and the opportunities presented for negotiation have been lost on the Nixon Administration. The President, as you know, is pursuing a policy of rapprochement with the Soviet Union. He is proceeding on the assumption that many of the differences between the two governments can now be accommodated and that the interest of neither is served by continuing conflict.

In this process, the highest priority should continue to rest on the negotiations with regard to disarmament. The SALT talks have been described by the President as "the most important arms control negotiations this country has ever entered." Their success could provide an inestimable contribution to international stability. By the same token, however, their failure could signal a resumption of the nuclear arms race at a point of great risk.

The initial indications reveal at least a mutual understanding of viewpoints and a mutual eagerness to move

towards agreement. The Soviet concern is already delineated as seeking to forestall the U. S. deployment of defensive weapons, that is the anti-ballistics missiles, and to enlarge the talks to include U. S. nuclear weapons which are deployed at forward bases in Europe and elsewhere within relatively short-range of Eastern Europe. On the other hand, the prime U. S. concern, it is clear, is the desire to limit Soviet offensive missiles and to maintain our alliances in Europe and the Far East.

Each of the two governments have acknowledged the priorities of the other. At least that is a beginning, in which the cards have been placed on the table. The candor is refreshing and provides, in my judgment, some modest basis for hope to the arms-burdened people of both nations. In the months ahead the negotiators will be preoccupied with complex questions involving the mathematics of limitation. In what way must the United States curb its deployment of ABM's and by how much if

agreement is to be reached? At what point should there be a ceiling on offensive Soviet ICBM's or on Soviet missile carrying submarines in order to achieve an agreement?

If the negotiators find answers to questions of this kind and an agreement is reached, the Senate will be well prepared to act on its responsibilities with regard to ratification. Even now, the talks are being watched with special interest in the Senate. Just a few weeks ago, I visited the U. S. Ambassador to the SALT talks who was at that time in Helsinki and, I must say, was reassured by his optimism.

Beyond disarmament, it seems to me that the two most complex issues which will confront the Soviet Union and the United States during this period of transition involve the relationships with inner Europe, east and west, and with China. With respect to China, it seems to me that the President has taken a highly significant initiative in his decision to go to Peking. The visit should not be expected to achieve much in

the way of substance. After a lapse of contact for almost a quarter of a century, however, the very act of going should open new prospects for building a stable peace in the Western Pacific. If these prospects are to materialize, clearly they cannot be pursued by the United States in China oblivious to the concerns of the Soviet Union or Japan. It would be dangerous in the extreme if the path to Peking were to bypass either Moscow or Tokyo.

In my judgment, a durable pattern of international stability in East Asia depends upon relations of comity among all four principal powers. I am delighted, therefore, that by the Treaty of Okinawan Reversion, as well as in his brief meeting in Alaska with the Emperor of Japan, the President has acted to protect--so to speak--one flank of his peregrination to the Chinese capital. At the same time, his announced visit to Moscow should safeguard the other, especially when it is coupled with the public assurances which he has given that a

rapprochement between China and the United States is in no way designed to exacerbate Sino-Soviet difficulties.

It may be that the round of personal contact by President Nixon will lead subsequently to more tangible results than meetings of this kind in the past. Who, now, for example, remembers Glassboro? And what was achieved there?

A natural follow-through of the President's visits, it seems to me, might well be quadrapartite talks on the maintenance of peace--a peace of the Pacific. In considering this question there is a need for a frank confrontation of the four major nations--Japan, the Soviet Union, China and the United States--whose power converges in the Western Pacific. There is also need for greater contact on this question between them and the smaller countries of the region. The clarity of direct contact can contribute, I believe, to the stability of a situation in which the nuclear power of three nations already converges and where the technical capacity exists to add a

fourth input at any time. Indeed, it would seem that Japan, alone having chosen to eschew nuclear weapons, might well take the initiative in calling such a conference. A quadrapartite conference might well be designed in the first instance to seek to bring nuclear dangers--whether in testing or in potential conflict--under rational control in the Western Pacific.

With regard to Europe, negotiations underway and agreements already achieved appear to be leading to a more stable situation. That progress provides further rationale for the reduction of the military deployments of both the Soviet Union and the United States. The circumstances are there, I believe, for a new thrust for peace in Europe. The present Administration has shown a greater responsiveness to these circumstances than has heretofore been the case. For its part, I believe the Soviet Union has given evidence of a new flexibility in responding affirmatively to the "eastern

policies" of Chancellor Willy Brandt. I refer in particular to the non-aggression pact which the Soviet Union and West Germany have already initialed and a similar treaty with Poland wherein West Germany has explicitly accepted the Oder-Neisse boundary. Finally, it should be noted that the Soviet Union has provided, in a four-power agreement, with France, the United Kingdom and the United States, official acknowledgment of the present status of West Berlin and its ties to West Germany.

In the light of these agreements as well as the hopeful emanations from the SALT talks, there is a timely opportunity for negotiating mutual and balanced reductions of forces between the NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries. Such reductions might well be over and above what I have long since believed can be a unilateral draw-down of 50% in U. S. force levels in Europe. May I say that I do not

regard the present level of U. S. forces in Europe in any sense as a "bargaining chip" in negotiating a mutual reduction of forces with the Soviet Union. There is no bargaining power in the irrelevant; an excessive and antiquated U. S. deployment in Europe, and the enormous costs which it entails cannot strengthen the U. S. position in negotiations. It can only weaken further the international economic position of this nation.

Whether the Soviet Union reciprocates or not, therefore, I believe the United States would be well-advised to make a substantial reduction of its military deployment in Western Europe. Indeed, a unilateral initiative in this connection may even act as a spur to mutual agreement. I do not think the Soviet Union will find it practicable to keep inflated forces in Eastern Europe when there are not inflated U. S. force levels in Western Europe. I am reminded again of Dwight D. Eisenhower's conclusion that one division

of U. S. forces in Europe would suffice for the purposes of the North Atlantic Treaty. That conclusion was set forth a dozen ~~years~~ years ago by the first NATO Commander but has been studiously ignored by successive administrations ever since.

Looking beyond prospective developments in arms control and the political and military stabilization of Europe, it seems to me that a major objective of our relationship with the Soviet Union should be a substantial increase in economic interchange. This nation's trade with the Soviet Union and the entire Eastern bloc has been held in check for many years by rusty barriers designed to prevent the shipment of so-called strategic items to Communist countries.

The present Administration has moved to facilitate the growth of trade in non-strategic goods with Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, the volume of U. S. trade with the bloc countries remains slender by any measure. Even though this trade rose by 30 percent in 1970 over the previous year, the total volume

now amounts to only seven-tenths of one percent of U. S. trade with all countries.

Until the advent of the present Administration, the United States government had been most reluctant to spur commercial relationships with Eastern Europe. By contrast, the Western Europeans have pursued these ties with great vigor for a number of years. In 1969, their combined trade with Eastern Europe was 15 times that of the United States in dollar volume.

The potential of East-West trade could be more fully realized by U. S. business if certain steps were to be taken at once. One would be the restoration of equal treatment to Soviet export commodities and a bill to accomplish this is now pending in Congress. Another would be to revise the list of strategic items to permit American business to sell goods in Eastern Europe which are now freely offered there by other western nations. Still another would be to broaden the

executive waiver power by which prohibitions can be lifted on financing sales to Eastern European nations through the Export-Import Bank. None of these things will necessarily result in a dramatic upsurge in trade but they might lead to increasing economic contacts. Over the long run, that could do much to strengthen the stability of the Soviet-U. S. relationship.

Following closely on the heels of trade, is the whole matter of cultural interchange which has so much to do with the perceptions that the two nations have of each other. Hopefully, if the people of the United States and the Soviet Union educate enough of each other's students, listen to enough of each other's musicians, watch each other's athletes compete, hold a sufficient number of symposia and so on through a wide range of activities, they might come to an increased understanding and appreciation with consequent reduction in the possibility of conflict. That is the premise on which our cultural exchange programs is based. It seems to

me to be a sound premise. Unfortunately, the present program with the Soviet Union has fallen on hard times for a variety of reasons, not the least of which have been acts of harassment by militant groups in this nation.

The Soviet Union and the United States have come a long way from the days of the Berlin Blockade, the Hungarian uprising, the Cuban missile crisis, and the bombastic encounters of the 1950's and early 1960's. We stand now at the threshold of a new era in which many of the suspicions and antagonisms of the past can be set aside. President Nixon has an opportunity to consolidate this progress, indeed, this progress to which his Administration has so greatly contributed.

It is a moment of historic opportunity--not in terms of national gain or political profit--but in the opportunity which is offered to increase the probability of the decent survival of modern civilization. If there is any lasting conclusion to which this symposium has led, I trust it is that we--both nations--the Soviet Union and the United States should not fail to seize this opportunity.